

28 February 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: E. H. Knoche  
ADCI

Hank,

1. Admiral Turner asked for themes for an auditorium assembly of CIA personnel with special emphasis on creativity and control.

25X1 2. This assembly, I assume will come sometime after 9 March. In the meantime, I'll draw on the attached themes from [ ] and prepare additional themes suggested by Andrew Falkiewicz.

3. In the March 9 assembly, Andrew advises that he is recommending Admiral Turner not speak - avoid upstaging the President - and simply make one or two brief comments in introducing the President.

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CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF INTELLIGENCE

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Selected Themes on Creativity and Controls (Drawn from two seminars on the subject sponsored by the Center)

1. Creativity, defined as the ability to stimulate new and fresh ideas on what and how to do things, is alive and well today in the Agency. The challenge is to preserve this climate and to encourage it.
2. But creativity, defined in terms of willingness to take new initiatives and risks, has been dampened lately to the point where the lack of it is having serious negative consequences on overall performance. Media and congressional exposés of intelligence, frequent changes in policy and leadership, threats of lawsuits and criminal liability have all contributed to a "keep your head down," low profile syndrome in the present climate.
  - a. Stiffling of initiative forces over-reliance on conventional wisdom and discourages new and fresh ideas.
3. But controls don't curb creativity in themselves. Properly and intelligently applied, controls can stimulate deeper thinking about new and better ways to achieve our goals and forward our cause--ways that are both proper and less expensive.
4. The style of leadership down the line is very important in assuring that controls spur creativity rather than inhibit it.
  - a. What we want in the Agency is:
    - (1) An openness of leadership that demands new and fresh initiatives, even with a risk attached, and rewards those that are beneficial.

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- (2) A requirement that all the pros and cons from whatever level really are considered before decisions are made. (The tendency now to take a harder look at the potential impact of our major new endeavors is a good thing and must be expanded and consolidated.)
- (3) A willingness to tolerate and give a fair hearing to alternate views.

b. What we want to avoid is:

- (1) A frenetic style of leadership which imposes artificial deadlines and erratic and confusing commands that prevent careful and intelligent planning and implementation by those who are the key to our success--the working level specialists from all elements of the Agency.
- (2) Overconcern with form and detail at the expense of substantive quality.
- (3) The "sucking-up" of decisionmaking authority to ever higher bureaucratic levels and the overcentralization and bureaucratic ossification of the Agency.

5. A change in rank and file attitude is also needed:

- a. To eliminate the sometimes justified fear of rocking the boat in proposing an alternative way.
- b. To eliminate the too frequent tendency to cover oneself by bucking the matter to higher authority for a decision, which then if wrong does not reflect on one's career.

6. Program continuity is essential to new initiatives. We must stick with new approaches long enough to give them a good try, modifying them in mid-course if need be, but not erratically abandoning them. To avoid confusion, management systems must encourage true dialogue and the setting of real goals. False goals can camouflage real needs, orienting a unit far more to information feeding processes and progress reports than is warranted.

7. The importance of knowing where we are going cannot be overstressed. We are emerging from an era in which everyone wants to tell us what we should and should

not do as an Agency and from an era of rapidly changing senior leadership each of which has had different and sometimes contradictory priorities. Guidance on our goals and the rationale for these goals is widely perceived as essential.

8. Better communication within the Agency is vital and can be used as a means to break down unnecessary compartmentalization. The concept of "one Agency" has been much touted but is still far from the reality of existence. To do this we must:
  - a. Have leaders who communicate the challenges they face down the line to encourage innovation (new and creative ideas) to meet these challenges.
  - b. Encourage the establishment of a variety of forms of "task" and "think" units at various levels to tackle vexing problems and difficulties in the way of more efficient operation and achievement of our goals.
  - c. Take the "country team" approach to future decisionmaking problems so that all elements of the Agency, not just the one ultimately to be charged with its execution, focus the best specialists on the problem.